

A
S E R M O N

OCCASIONED BY

THE MUCH LAMENTED DEATH

OF

MISS COCKS,

Who died March 24, 1790, in the Twenty-first Year of her Age.

PREACHED, AT THE

MEETING-HOUSE, IN CARR'S-LANE, BIRMINGHAM,

APRIL 4.

BY JAMES BASS.

I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth.—Jer. ii. 2.

Precious in the sight of the Lord, is the death of his saints.—Ps. cxvi. 15.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Author of the Discourse presented in the following pages, was himself deeply affected with the mournful event, which gave rise to it. With this impression, it was his desire and aim, in compliance with the request of the bereaved parents, to improve that event to the congregation among whom he is honoured to preach the Gospel. Many expressed pleasure in hearing it from the pulpit, and a desire to have it in print; as a monument of respect to the memory of the deceased, and a memento to themselves. He is satisfied that this, with the hope of its being useful, especially to young people, will form a sufficient apology for making it publick. To the blessing of God therefore, and the candid and serious reflections of the reader, he cheerfully commits it.

*Moor Street, Birmingham,
April 14, 1790.*

THE AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

THE Author of the following work was himself deeply affected with the wonderful cure, which gave rise to it. With this conviction it was his duty and also in compliance with the request of the benevolent parents to prove that event to the satisfaction among whom he is honoured to preach the Gospel. Many expressed pleasure in hearing it from the pulpit, and a desire to have it in print, as a monument of respect to the memory of the deceased, and a memento to themselves. He is persuaded that this, with the hope of its being useful especially to young people, will form a sufficient apology for making it public. To the blessing of God therefore, and the cause and laudable intentions of the reader, he cheerfully consents.

NEW-YORK:
JAN. 1800.

A
S E R M O N, &c.

HE COMETH FORTH LIKE A FLOWER AND IS CUT
DOWN. Job xiv. 2.

THESE words have been often chosen, and with great propriety for a funeral text. They might stand a perpetual and just motto, to every essay on the frailty of man. Through his progress to that beauteous perfection, which his nature attains in this life, they describe him to his last change by death.—The plain similitude employed, fills the mind with pleasing solemnity; and, if it is more applicable to some than it is to others, our deceased sister and friend, was among them who claim the preference.—Thus it appeared to those, who were honoured to rear *that flower*, whose *cutting-down* in youth and bloom, we this day sincerely lament; and therefore, to improve so moving a providence, I was requested to found my present address on the words now read.

But whether the text or the event before us speaks the loudest, seems doubtful—both proclaim the humbling circumstances of our common nature—*that in the morning it flourisheth and groweth up, in the evening is cut down and withereth*—both conspire, especially in the gay and flattering seasons of life, to

remind us of death; and to admonish all in pathetic strains *immediately* to prepare to meet their God. *Surely*, the memory of the dear deceased, throws a peculiar and solemn emphasis, on the language of Job.—*He cometh forth like a flower and is cut down.*

A flower of the field cometh forth from the ground—in every stage to mature growth is tender and exposed to dangers; and, while its opened beauties are displayed—while its fragrant sweets bless the ravished beholder, the slightest stroke cuts it down. The allusion, is not to a flower which stands neglected, till it fades away; but to one that is cropped off or cut down with design; and which is a *striking* emblem of man.

My text thus introduced; with a view to the object of our meeting together, I will consider:

I. In what respects man cometh forth, like a flower.

II. Show, that like a flower of the field, he is ever liable to be cut down by death, and that the event is sure.

III. That this event happeneth not, but by the special permission and design of God.

I. Man cometh forth like a flower in respect to his body.—Our first parents, indeed, were produced by the divine hand, in a state of maturity.—God gave their bodies that perfection, which, should afterwards become the standard of human nature: but, he appointed their posterity, from small beginnings, by slow and gradual advances, to grow up and attain that standard. This appointment, displays both his wisdom and goodness. The organs
of

of our body in tender infancy, directed by his skilful arrangement and power, wonderfully perform their several functions—the feeble system, receives in all its parts a due and regular supply; and, is thus increased. — Various notwithstanding, are the infirmities, disorders and hazards, which, from this period to manhood, invade and threaten our brittle frame. The growing-up of the flower therefore, is marked, with the *peculiar* care and providence of God.—Good men bear this in mind with adoring gratitude: their language is—*thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother's breasts—I was cast upon thee from the womb; thou art my God**.

Under the wing and care of the Almighty, man is reared to strength, perfection and beauty; and, this order of his coming forth like a flower, is farther a wise and merciful appointment, as it forms and strengthens the social bands. The infant charge is endeared to the mother's heart, and new endearments still arise, as it smiles and grows in her fostering arms. When reason dawns, it learns its interest in her tender cares, and fawns and clings, in confidence and love. Hence—those noble and generous affections, which answer to the relation of parent and child, and which, nothing but death can extinguish in the pious breast—hence—many of those happy feelings, which sooth our sorrows and refine our joys. But were we produced into the world, matured and perfect men, how different the scene? What should we resemble, but foreigners, met in company together, from distant climes? What

* Psalm xxii. 9, 10.

should we be but strangers and aliens one to another? no relative affections to warm the heart: no mutual relative dependance, in all the changing uncertainties of life, to inspire confidence and ease the mind. We are bound therefore, to bless God, for the established order, which in this respect, he hath given to nature, and in which, our good was so much consulted.—*Man cometh forth like a flower—*

2. In respect to his mind.—He is evidently born ignorant of all things; but, with those powers of knowing, in the improvement of which, the chief glory of his nature consists. A beautiful body without understanding, were less pleasing, because, more preposterous than a marble statue; but to grow in wisdom, as well as stature, is the crown and ornament of man. His mind gradually opens with that knowledge, which, is presented to it; and, unspeakably happy they, who are blessed in early life with wise and pious instructors—to teach the young idea how to shoot—to train them up in the way they should go*. With the divine blessing and the dew of heaven to water such, they *come forth*; like him who is the Rose of Sharon and the Lilly of the valleys†—They improve in that wisdom, which is *profitable for all things*—They grow in favour both with God and man: and the fragrance of such flowers is grateful to heaven and earth.—*Man cometh forth like a flower.—*

3. In respect to that beauty, which is common to his nature.—In this, the excellencies both of his

* Prov. xxii. 6.

† Can. ii. 1.

mental and bodily endowments centre. When these have arrived to the measure and proportion of a perfect man, he stands arrayed in the noblest gifts from the God of nature: no creature on earth is equally adorned. As the flower is the pride and glory of the valley, so *man* is the glory of this lower world, the master-piece of creation.—While the structure of his body is graceful and adapted with exquisite wisdom for great achievements, the powers of his mind, *matured* complete his beauty. God made him but a little lower than the angels, and crowned him with glory and honour*: he was made after the similitude of his great Creator†; yea, he is the image and glory of God! And while the blood moves rapidly in the veins---while his spirits are lively and flowing, he diffuses around him gaiety and pleasure: like the blushing flower of spring he imparts delight: But—to hide pride from man it was, that—*The voice said cry; and he* (the prophet, the minister) *said, what shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field. The grass withereth, and the flower fadeth: because the spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass‡. The most beautiful frame, embellished with every grace of improvement and knowledge, cherishes the seeds of disorder and death. The body is dead, is appointed to die, because of sin§: because the leprosy hath entered the house, however elegant and finished the structure, it must be all pulled down and levelled with the dust||: the king of terrors is often commissioned, to aim his arrow at the golden mark, and to single out those for his prey*

* Psal. viii. 5.

† Gen. i. 27.

‡ Isaiah xl. 6, 7.

§ Rom. viii. 10.

|| Lev. xiv. 45.

who are most desirable. On such events we can only exclaim with amazement and sorrow.—Oh sin what hast thou done!!

—*And is cut down*

II. I am led to show, that man like the flower of the field is ever liable to be cut down by death, and that the event is sure.—It often happeneth to the flower, which blooms in the field, with beauty and pride, that *the wind passeth over it and it is gone*, or some fatal stroke lays it to the ground. It is so with man. Not a pore in his body, but is an open door, extended wide-enough, at every moment of his existence, to let in death: and in all the vigour and beauty of his prime---some chilling damp---some fierce disease, is not unfrequently directed to enter, and bring him down. What an example of this is now before us, in our deceased friend! which reminds me of the following lines.

“ When spring appears; and violets blow,

“ And shed a rich perfume;

“ How soon the fragrance breaths its last!

“ How short-liv'd is the bloom!

“ Fresh in the morn the *summer* rose

“ Hangs with'ring ere 'tis noon;

“ We scarce enjoy the balmy gift

“ But mourn the pleasure gone!

In the midst of life we are in death. The changes experienced in our bodies, as our years advance, forebode their last change: we not only *come forth like the flower*, but *we flee also as the shadow and continue not*; we are hastening to the grave, the house appointed for all living; nor, can the youngest tell
how

how soon it may be opened for *him*, The plaint which a prospect of speedy death, drew from the lips of good Hezekiah in the meridian of life, may shortly apply to many of us, as it now does to those young persons, lately our companions and friends, who are gone before us---*I said in the cutting off of my days, I shall go to the gates of the grave, I am deprived of the residue of my years**. The Lord may come in the second watch; or come in the third watch: he may call us in early or later life. We cannot therefore be safe, and should not be satisfied, till just hopes may be cherished of a preparation to give him a welcome reception, and without dismay, to obey his summon.---Lay it down then as a maxim, from which, by divine help, you will never depart, that the business of the first and chief importance you have in hand respects eternity; and, that you will---*seek first the kingdom of God and the righteousness thereof*.---Say to yourselves, *especially*, you in younger life---“The beauty of man consumes like
 “a moth! I see from the dispensations of God to
 “others---as *young, as healthy and flourishing* as I,
 “that one event happeneth to all---I have no secu-
 “rity for a day to come: and, should uncertain to-
 “morrow cut me down, oh how will it fare with me
 “for ever! would death prove gain or loss? am I in
 “favour with God, against whom I have sinned, or
 “not? Have I received Christ Jesus the Lord, the
 “only Saviour of ruined men, as the sacred scrip-
 “tures make him known, and, do I with duty and
 “zeal, *so walk in him*? Is he made of God unto me,
 “*wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption*?†

* Isaiah xxxviii. 19.

† 1 Cor. i. 30.

“ I am

“ I am not too young to die, and therefore not too
 “ young to be in good earnest about my salvation---I
 “ am not too young to receive the decisive sentence
 “ at the bar of God, and therefore not too young to
 “ sue for mercy---my age is capable of the bliss of
 “ heaven, or the misery of hell; and by how much
 “ the more adorned by the author of my being, by
 “ so much the more capacitated, for *happiness* or
 “ *woe!* it is high time therefore, to know my title
 “ to the one, that I may escape the other.”—Turn
 such a soliloquy into fervent prayer---that God for
 his mercy’s sake in Christ Jesus, would impress these
 thoughts effectually on the heart---that you may
 never return to folly; or, be diverted; or, stop short,
 till you are christians *indeed*---prepared to glorify
 God, in your soul and in your body which are his;
whether it be by life or by death. Forgive this dig-
 gression, and return with me to consider,

III. That the event of death happeneth not, but
 by the special permission and design of God.—The
 notion of cutting-down, by which it is described
 in my text, supposes this; nor can it be a contin-
 gency, or without the direction of him, who num-
 bereth the hairs of our head, and of whom, at every
 moment, we hold our life. From particular cases,
 and the voice of scripture, the general truth is in-
 ferred—that, the *time*, the *place*, and *manner* of our
 death, are known to and ordered of God.—Moses
 was commanded, at a particular time, to ascend
 the mount, and die before the Lord†.---The life
 of king Hezekiah was protracted, by an express

† Deut. xxxii. 49.

order from heaven, *fifteen years*†.---It was revealed to St. Peter by the Lord Jesus, *that he must soon put off this tabernacle*, i. e. die§. And God, we are told, *who made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on the face of the earth, hath determined their times, and fixed the bounds of their habitation*||. His adorable sovereignty in this respect, was the subject which deeply affected Job, in the chapter before us. It treats of the common nature of man as *unclean*, and therefore *mortal*; and, of the appointments of God concerning it. Verses 4, 5, and 6, *Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one. Seeing his days are determined, the numbers of his months are with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass: turn from him* (withdraw the tokens of thine anger) *till he shall accomplish as an hireling his days*.----Job speaks not here, of the threescore years and ten, which measure the ordinary span, but of the life of every man, and of all men individually. He compares this to the days of an hireling, which are numbered and fixed by the master's pleasure. The same idea is stated in the beginning of the seventh chapter---*Is there not an appointed time for man upon the earth? Are not his days also as the days of an hireling?*---At death, then, my brethren, at the death of every one, God is eminently near. At that solemn season, he is prosecuting his special purposes, and acting worthy of him, who *hath our times in his hands*.---but, who *giveth none account of any of his matters*! Hence---be it remembered, that---*we are all immortal, till*

† Isaiah xxxviii. 5.

§ 2 Peter i. 14.

|| Acts xvii. 26.

our work is done!---that, without an order from him, an angel's arm can't push us to the tomb!

But the event of death is more important, than merely to mark the bound, which God hath set us.---We cut down the fragrant flower, to embrace it, and enjoy its sweets---but the noxious flower is cut down to prevent it from scattering abroad pernicious seeds. In this view we are led by the similitude in our text, to reconcile the divine conduct, in such afflictive dispensations as that before us. The design of God, like himself, will appear ---wise---and great---and glorious.

1. Then, he commissions death to cut down the flower, or orders the sun of life to set at noon, to screen those he loves, from the burden and heat of the day.---As life goes on, increasing connections are almost inseparable from increasing years: these add to our duties, our temptations, and our cares. The sun waxeth hotter, as the day comes on, and the labour of man is increased. The experience of the godly, especially in their passage from the easy age of youth to declining days, exemplifies this remark.---Where is the christian of long-standing in the church and in the world, whose wisdom and vigilance and zeal, have not in his several connections, been all necessary *to act well?* whose virtues have not been frequently put, to a *severe and dangerous* trial? From your entrance on the heavenly life at first, my fellow professor, down to the present day, you have found it a work of growing difficulty---*to keep the commands of God, and the faith of Jesus.* You reflect on the seductions, the snares

snare and business through which you have passed, and which still surround you, and adore that upholding power, which *maketh you to stand*.

From your experience then in this world, look forward by the vision of St. John, and learn the unspeakable happiness of the pious dead---*I heard (saith that venerable apostle) a voice from heaven saying unto me, write, blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth: yea, saith the spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them*†. But shall we deprecate a long life, because it will prove laborious? that be far from us. For a real christian *to live, is Christ*; and grey hairs are honourable and blessed, when they are found in the ways of righteousness: his rest will be eternal; and, his peculiar happiness, which softens every sorrow in life is---*that to die is gain*.

We wonder however at the dispensation, which consigns *one to die in full strength, being wholly at ease and quiet*; who promised fair for usefulness, for years, and years to come; while another languisheth with infirmities and pains, *and never eateth with pleasure*: but shall any teach God knowledge seeing he judgeth them that are *high*?---Seeing the empire of the church, and of the world, is subject to his controul? it is enough for us to know, of all the dead who died in the Lord—that their work was done, and their end blessed---for---*they enter into peace---they rest in their beds*§.

2. God graciously designs in calling pious youth by death to secure them from future ills—Man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upwards; and

† Rev. xiv. 13.

§ Isaiah lvii. 2.

various, and deep and grievous are those troubles which some endure. Job was an instance of this. Their heavy pressure occasioned this mournful prayer.---*O that thou wouldst hide me in the grave, that thou wouldst keep me secret till thy wrath is past†.* The pious who die in early life are hid of God. *The righteous are taken from the evil to come.* A remarkable instance of his merciful and wise design in the death of a pious youth, we meet with, 1 Kings xiv. 15.---Abijah, for this was his name, was the son of an abandoned king---was surrounded with the flatteries of a wicked court, and in danger from the temptations of exalted life. Singular troubles moreover, awaited the throne and kingdom of his father. Thus were his virtues exposed! But heaven would not long trust its favourite in circumstances so critical. This was the message sent of God by the mouth of the prophet.---*The child shall die. And all Israel shall mourn for him and bury him: for he only of Jeroboam shall come to the grave, because in him there was found some good thing towards the Lord God of Israel.*---O happy youth indeed! His character it is true was not finished---he was young---but there was some *good thing* in him, some principle of all goodness, which was in the sight of God of great price: and lest it should be contaminated or borne down by the corruptions and troubles of the times, the vessel was broke, and the treasure lodged safe in the cabinet of heaven; or the flower thus perfumed, was cut down, securely to bloom in life and glory.---Silent then every murmur. Pious and early victims to death obtain

† Job xiv. 13.

an exemption from evils to come---they gain an early entrance on the work and joys of a safe and more happy world. *Absent from the body they are present with the Lord*†. Our loss is their gain.

But many die in youth, of whom it cannot be said any thing really good towards the Lord God of Israel is found in them.

3. Then, in cutting such down, in causing their sun to set at noon, God justly designs to overwhelm them, with outer darkness, and to prevent them from spreading the pernicious seeds of vice. Was not this manifest in the tragical death of Absalom, who was cut down in a career of the highest wickedness? He stands recorded in sacred story, as a striking contrast, to the youth, but now mentioned. Had he been longer spared, he might have ruined his father's kingdom, exceedingly harrassed and afflicted the church of God, and covered the land with prophaneness, injustice and blood. But, *the righteous Lord loveth righteousness* §, but *the wicked, and him that loveth violence his soul hateth*. The impious profligate, with eyes full of adultery, and an heart fraught with the rage of an unnatural conspiracy and rebellion, was cut down with a stroke. But ah! how deeply the fatal intelligence pierced the soul of a godly father, whose views as a prophet and a saint could not be confined to the death of the body. The language of his bitter moan, indicates this.--*The king was much moved, and went to the chamber, and wept; and as he went, thus he said, O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom,*

† 2 Cor. v. 8.

§ Psal. xi. 5. 7.

would God I had died for thee, O Absalom my son my son! †

It is awful beyond all possible expression for incorrigible sinners to have filled up the measure of their iniquities in early life, and for God in mercy to the world, to dismiss them into the land of darkness, because they are unworthy of a place in the land of the living, and would prove dangerous pests in society with men! From the bottom of my heart I intreat the Father of mercies, that this may never be the case with any one who now hears me!——But while *the wicked is driven away into his wickedness, the righteous hath hope in his death.*

THE IMPROVEMENT.

I. A Christian assembly hath seldom met on a solemn occasion like this, with more sincere lamentations for the deceased, mingled with more cordial sympathy with the surviving mourners. There was that in the case of our young friend, which to those who knew her especially, renders the event truly affecting. Just entering a new relation; stepping on the stage of more public action, in high esteem with all her connexions, she was almost suddenly commanded back by death! A short season of sickness and pain, which baffled every effort of medical skill, changed a blooming countenance, and sent her away. The flower was cut down! and all the just expectations and hopes, which friends had built on so promising and likely a life died with her! But if there was any virtue, if there was any praise

† 2 Sam. xviii. 33.

in her temper and carriage, she being dead yet speaketh to us. I am constrained by justice to her memory, and by concern for your improvement, to mention one thing in particular. There is good reason to believe that she habitually made conscience of secret prayer to God; and I propose her in this as an example to all, but *particular* to my young friends; can all the young people in this assembly say, that day by day, they make it a point of conscience and duty to pray to God, for his counsel, preservation and blessing? can old and young say this? Whoever cannot (for men may join in the prayers of the family and the church, without praying at all) live without God in the world, and if they persevere, will stand reprov'd at the day of his coming, as well by conscience and the nature of things, as by the example I now propose. To live without prayer, is to slight the advocacy of the Lord Jesus, which, in great compassion to our guilt, and misery, and fears, was established in heaven, *That we might come boldly to the throne of grace, to obtain mercy and find grace to help us in times of need:*† it is moreover to deny God in our hearts, while we confess him with our tongues; and to indulge a criminal independence of the most high! It supposes a heart too destitute of the fear of God, and is certainly a sure way to inevitable ruin.

But there were two features in the character of the deceased, which came under more general observation (true devotion and piety, especially in

† Heb. iv. 13. with chap. x. *passim*.

youth, are secret and silent things) and which I shall mention, not to commend the dead, but farther to counsel the living. She was strictly obedient to her parents---and all who were in habits of acquaintance with her will join their testimony---that in all her circle of friends and associates, she discovered a sense of the highest *pleasure in pleasing others*. These are real excellencies in young people, and such as all should emulate. Obedience to pious parents is ultimately obedience to God; and *courteousness*, is a christian virtue of distinguished worth. Permit me,

II. To suggest a word to the bereaved, particularly to the parents and brothers of the deceased.---God, my friends, hath called you, by this dispensation, to resign to himself a choice and invaluable comfort—I hope and believe that you the mourning parents, *desire to be still, and not open your mouth because the Lord hath done it*. The language of your bible, and of your judgment (however wounded feelings may rise up and oppose) is—*it is well*. Remember that God needed your daughter no longer, as a servant on earth; give her therefore to him a willing sacrifice.--To assist you in cultivating that profound submission---that entire resignation to God, in which you will find the greatest relief---take the prophets and holy men recorded in scripture, for an example of suffering afflictions, and of patience. Recollect the conduct of Aaron---when his sons were cut off with the evident tokens of the divine displeasure, which is the reverse of your case, in silent reverence he owned and glorified God.---*And Aaron held his peace.*

peace ¶. Consider Job:---When his ten children, all his children were slain by a sudden and fatal stroke, what does he say? *Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither---the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, and blessed be the name of the Lord* ¶. His admirable conduct is thus thrown into verse, by a pious poet:

" ——— and father now no more

" Prone to the dust he bow'd his rev'rend head,

" And, worshipping, with humblest accents said:

" Peace every murmur; naked into birth

" I came, and naked shall return to earth!

" The Lord in bounty gave, but gave in trust,

" The Lord resumes; resuming, not unjust;

" Giving, resuming, he is still the Lord,

" Still be the glories of his name ador'd.

But while you wish to imitate these examples, you have much to comfort your hearts, and to dry your tears. Often I doubt not, from a sense of duty, and with parental affection, you gave that child up to the Lord in prayer, which he hath now taken to himself. You endeavoured too, to teach her his will; and, in your family devotions, to take her as it were by the hand, daily to direct her face towards his throne. We hope your labour was not in vain; she became we trust, an early suppliant there for herself.---You have then the animating prospect, of meeting her again, when she and you shall be vastly improved for society together, and shall *never* be parted more.---The doctrine of the soul's immortality and the resurrection of the dead,

¶ Lev. x. 3.

¶ Job i. 21.

which

which you steadfastly believe, is not less fully established by the word of God, than calculated to administer consolation to you. What saith St. Paul? *Sorrow not as others without hope. For if we believe that Jesus died, and rose again, even so them also who sleep in Jesus will God bring with him*†. Besides you are not like Job, deprived of all your children at once. You have three remaining, still younger in life, who, I sincerely pray, may grow up and prove comforts to you---blessings to the world, and ornaments to the church of God.—That this may be the case my young friends, I wish, every proper feeling to be awakened in your minds on this solemn occasion. O that the Lord who speaks loudly to you in this providence may help you to improve it! Could your sister address you from the tomb, would she not do it in language like this.---“ Weep not
 “ for me my brothers, but for yourselves---remem-
 “ ber my early and unexpected death as a warning
 “ to you---‘ Know ye the God of our fathers, and
 ‘ serve him with a perfect heart and with a willing
 ‘ mind, for the Lord searcheth all hearts, and un-
 ‘ derstandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts,
 ‘ if ye seek him he will be found of you, but if ye
 ‘ forsake him he will cast you off for ever¶.” Fre-
 quently bear this in mind as her language to you,
 when in after life you reflect on her memory.

III. The providence before us addresses those young persons in moving eloquence, who have long known and been the companions of the deceased.---
 How wonderful the change which has passed on

† 1 Thess. iv. 13.

¶ 1 Chron. xxviii. 9.

your associate and friend, with whom but very lately you pleasantly conversed: who lately worshipped with us in this place! what a change hath passed upon her body!---what a change upon her soul?---her body claims kindred with the dust, and with the worms! its beauty is consumed in the grave! Oh! how does the thought humble the pride of man, and becloud the brightest scenes of human glory.---Her soul, O whither shall we trace it!

———— “ Perhaps it sings

“ To some new golden harp, th’ Almighty deeds,

“ The names, the honours of its Saviour-God” —

Released as it is from flesh and sense, viewing all things as they really are, could it become your instructor and your guide---what lessons would it teach you? in what paths would it lead you?

IV. All who hear me, both young and old, are called by the ensigns of mortality around us---by the memory of the deceased, and the voice of the preacher--to think of salvation---of death and eternity! O that all could familiarize these awful, these delightful subjects, with the faith, the hope and comfort of the gospel! O that the death of one may animate and quicken all to give diligence to make their calling and their election sure!---nor may any of you fail of the grace of God!

Lastly, Our circumstances this afternoon who statedly join together in a monthly communion at the table of the Lord are very peculiar. From the solemnization of one death, we are called to commemorate another: A death, my brethren, which hath taken away the terror of dying: and removed the
curse

curse for ever, from all believers. What strong demonstration is before us, that sin hath "reigned unto death!" and what pleasing evidence does the table of the Lord display, that "grace hath reigned through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." How cheering and yet how solemn, how suitable, how divinely full, are the following words with which I conclude!---"As it is appointed to all men once to die, but after death the judgment, so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many, and to them who look for him, shall he appear the second time, without sin unto salvation¶."

¶ Heb. ix. 27, 28.



THE END.

